

COAKLEY HOTEL  
572-574 15th Street  
Oakland  
Alameda County  
California

HABS No. CA-2647

HABS  
CAL  
1-OAK,  
21-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Western Region  
Department of the Interior  
San Francisco, California 94107

# HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

## COAKLEY HOTEL

HABS No. CA-2647

HABS  
CAL  
1-OAK,  
21-

**Location:** 572-74 15th St., Oakland, Alameda Co., CA 94612. Parcel No. 3-69-9.

**Significance:** This building is a contributing structure to the Oakland Downtown district. The Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey describes the district as, "...an architecturally, historically, and functionally distinct area within central Oakland. It contains the City Hall and a strong concentration of well-preserved commercial buildings from about 1900 to 1929, spanning two boom periods for Oakland, the East Bay response to the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906, and the intense real estate and financial growth of the 1920s. These urbane, mostly Beaux-Arts inspired buildings display a general unity of style and scale, and represent many of the better-known Bay Area commercial architects of the period. In their siting and relation to each other, with 17-21-story "skyscrapers" punctuating lower construction, they represent an urban design termed "ideal" by City Beautiful planner Werner Hegemann in 1915, and gave Oakland a distinctive and much-photographed skyline. Downtown's development was one of a series of distinct stages whereby Oakland's commercial center moved north along Broadway from its original waterfront location in the 1850s, to Uptown (around 20th) in the 1930s. The economics of the era in which the 14th and Broadway district developed made it Oakland's office and financial center, in contrast to the Old Oakland district alterations and demolitions, in their historic relationships to one another, skyscrapers spaced among lower buildings creating a still-distinctive downtown Oakland skyline."

The Coakley Hotel is one of several small residential hotels in the downtown district and is of interest for its use of reinforced concrete in a small-scale Colonial Revival building. According to the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey: "It contributes to a downtown historic district in age, scale, and use, and is typical of the clustering of hotels and smaller-scale buildings on the edges of the district."

**Description:** The Coakley Hotel is a rectangular (100'x25'), three-story, reinforced concrete structure with a basement level, retail space on the ground floor and 20 residential units above. The California Department of Parks and Recreation Office of Historic Preservation Primary Record, prepared by Bruno Giberti, states, "The street facade is finished in stucco, painted yellow with beige accents. The site is an inside lot; the building is rectangular in plan and designed to be attached." The street facade consists of a storefront and two building entries; one to the two upper stories and one to the basement; two, two-story polygonal wood bays above; a bracketed,

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sheet-metal cornice with a red tile roof; a parapet with projecting piers at either end. "The bays have paneled spandrels, double-hung wood windows with leaded-glass transoms, modillion-block cornices, and flat roofs. Other windows are also double-hung wood. There is a metal fire-escape on the south side of the building, a light court on the east, and a penthouse clad in sheet metal on the roof. The first floor has been extensively altered; only the transom and panel over the entry appear to be original." Openings at the rear facade include a roll-up door at the ground level and four double-hung windows on the upper levels.

The interior of the building is composed of four levels: a basement, a first floor retail space and two floors of residential units. The basement extends six feet beneath the sidewalk, with a sidewalk elevator at the southwest corner. The space is divided longitudinally by a row of 8"x 8" wooden posts and is broken into two main spaces by a wall that connects with the light court.

The first floor retail space runs the length of the building along the eastern side with a retail space at the front, utility spaces including a lavatory, toilet room and kitchen at the central light court, and a rear storage area running the full width of the building. A storage loft extends above the utility spaces. Extensive remodeling at this floor has left minimal amounts of historic detail intact. Remaining historic fabric in the front /retail space includes the 5'-10" scored plaster wainscot.

The second floor is accessed by a long stairway corridor that runs along the western edge of the building. The second and third floors have identical layouts and consist of a central corridor with sleeping rooms on each side, terminating at the north end with a communal kitchen. Each of these floors contains ten sleeping rooms with lavatory and closet, and a communal toilet, shower room and kitchen. Four lightwells, now covered, originally ventilated the toilet and shower rooms and several of the sleeping rooms. Toward the rear of the building, along the west wall, a winding staircase leads to the roof and to the basement. These top two levels of the building appear to be minimally altered. Typical finishes include wooden baseboards throughout, and wooden chair rails in the kitchen areas.

**Historical Context:** According to the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey: "Building permit #22197 was issued January 26, 1911 for a lodging house and stores at a projected cost of \$15,000. The builder was Carl Jacobsen, and the architect D.L. Coleman. City directories from 1908 to 1918 list a David C. Coleman as an architect residing at 6132 Dover in Oakland; other works have not yet been found. The owner was listed as James Coakley of Coakley Bros.

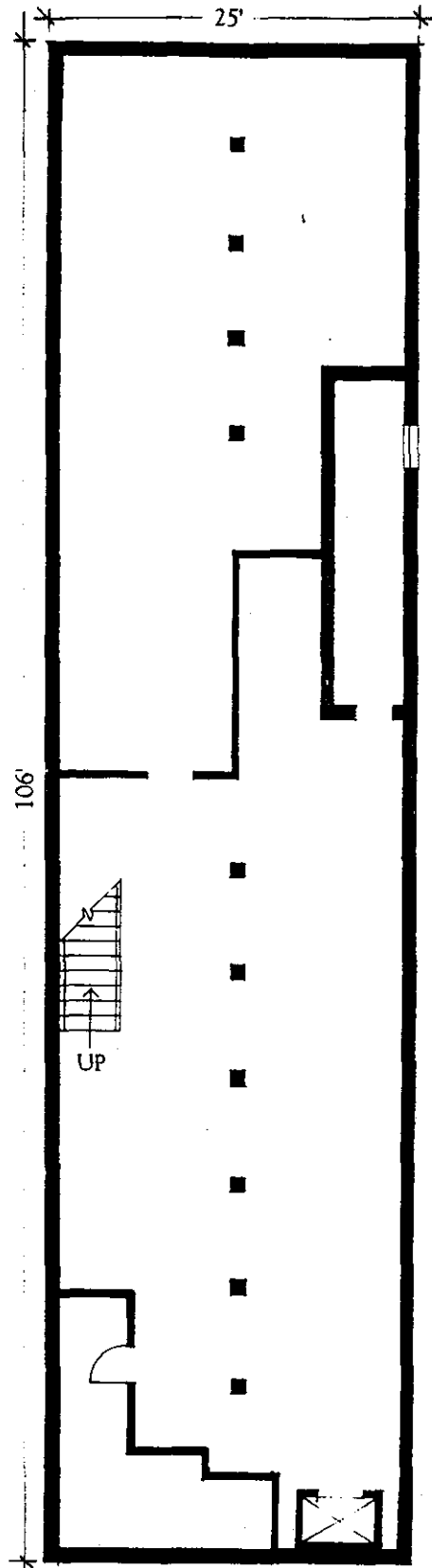
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Meats, an Oakland business since the 1890s. From 1915 to about 1930 the meat company occupied the storefront of the Coakley Hotel. James' son, J. Frank Coakley (1897-1983) became District Attorney of Alameda County in 1947."

**Sources:** Bruno Giberti, Archaeological/Historical Consultants, California  
Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation,  
"Primary Record", 1994.

City of Oakland Office of Planning and Building. Oakland Cultural  
Heritage Survey. "Historic Resources Inventory." 1985.

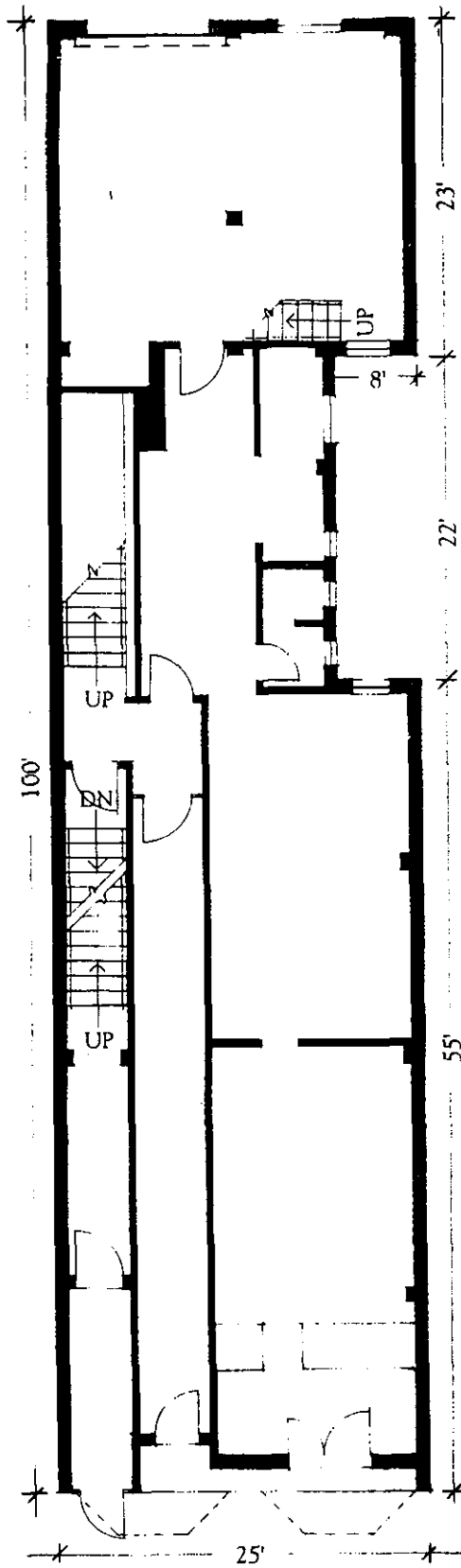
**Project Information:** Carey & Co. Inc., Architecture, prepared this survey for EIP Associates.  
The structure is scheduled to be demolished for the construction of the  
Elihu M. Harris State Office Building on its site. Nancy Goldenberg,  
Architectural Historian, was project manager for Carey & Co. and Elizabeth  
Roberts was primary author of this document. The report was prepared in  
August, 1995.



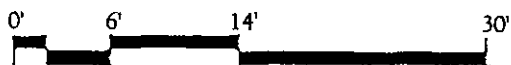
BASEMENT LEVEL



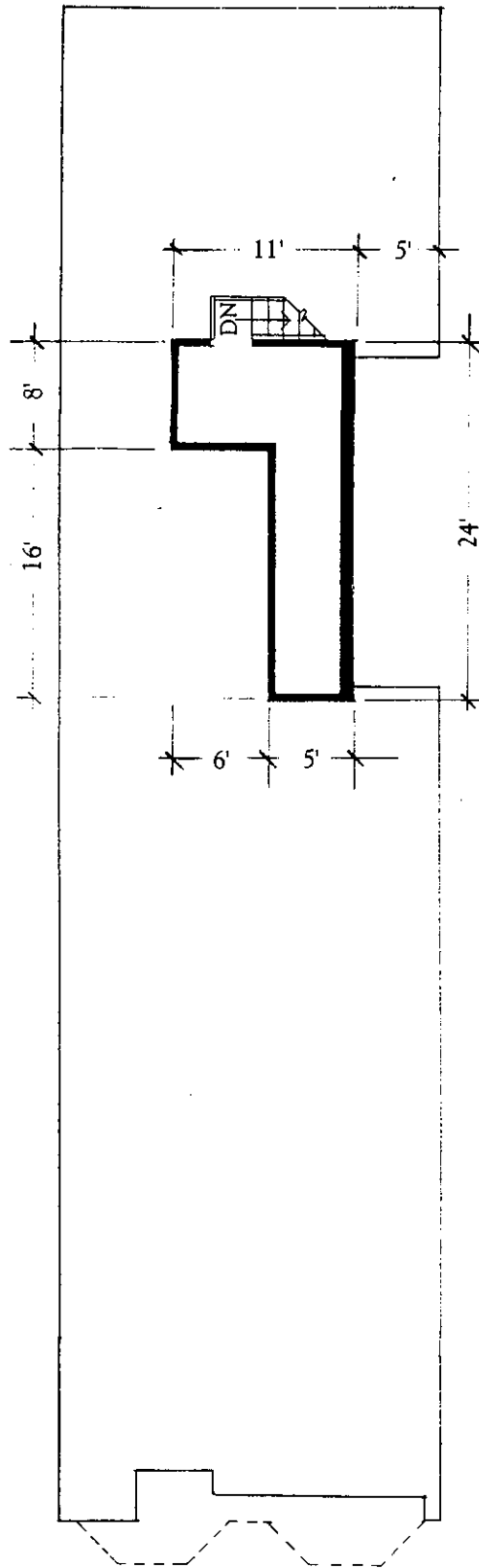
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ARCHITECTURE



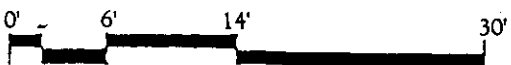
FIRST FLOOR



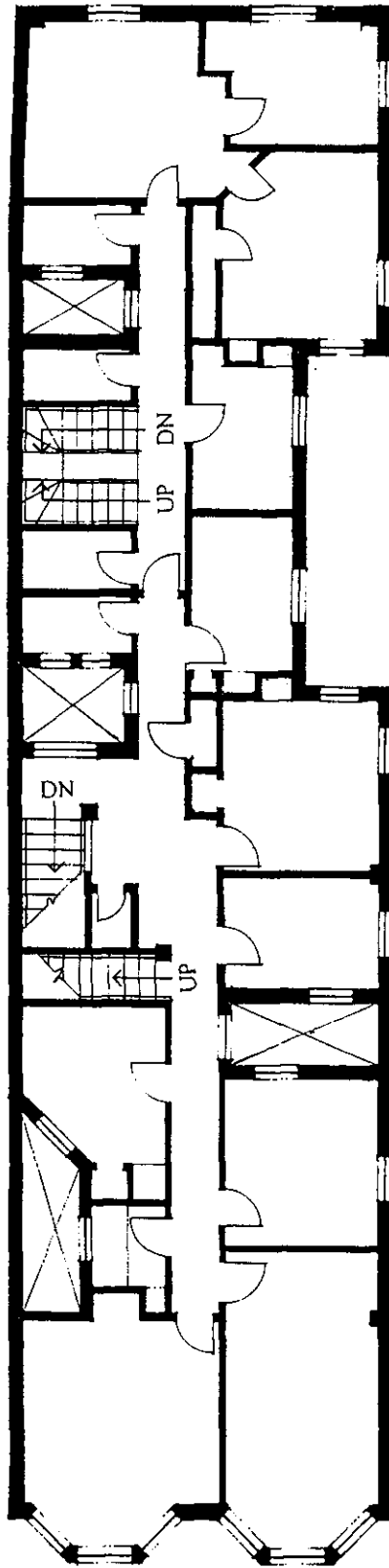
CAREY & CO. INC.  
ARCHITECTURE



MEZZANINE



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ARCHITECTURE

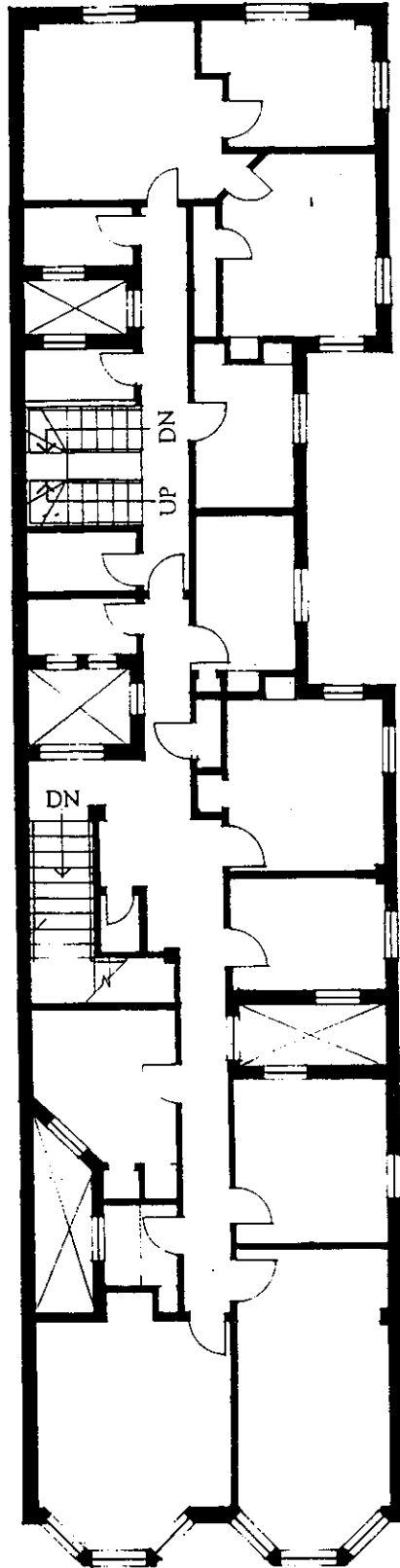


SECOND FLOOR

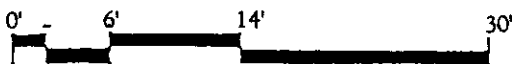


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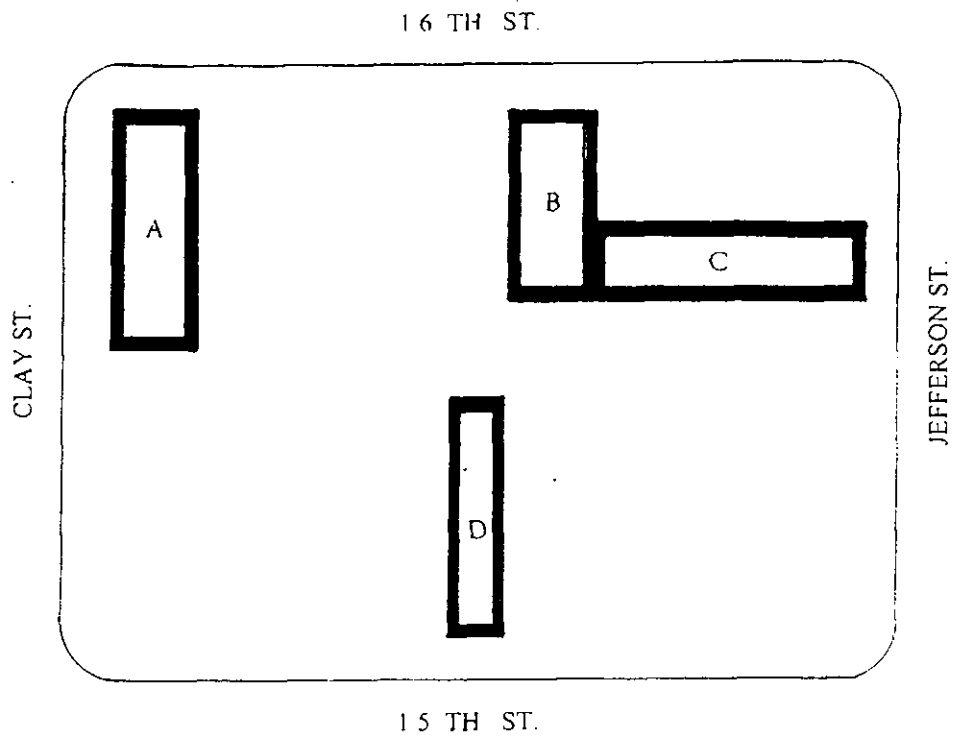




THIRD FLOOR



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ARCHITECTURE



- A. TUCKER BUILDING
- B. ALAMEDA COUNTY LOAN ASSOCIATION BUILDING ANNEX
- C. STULSAFT BUILDING
- D. COAKLEY BUILDING



SITE PLAN



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